

# COOL CAFE NEWSLETTER:

## Week #2: Friendship

### THEME:

Friendship! How to be a good friend, make new friends, and include others.

### CONSIDER THIS!

- Having a close group of friends is important for helping students belong.
- Friendships are more complicated due to higher level thinking
- Middle schoolers often compare themselves to others and become self-conscious of differences.
- Challenges: peer pressure; cliques; gossip; teasing; bullying; electronic devices (cyber-bullying)

#### Let's Chat about Mental Health

- Middle schoolers benefit from small group interactions that foster friendship development and safe sharing of thoughts and feelings at a deeper emotional level.

### TIPS FOR PROMOTING FRIENDSHIP

#### Suggested Activities for Cafeteria Supervisors

- Develop a peer buddy program where students with disabilities are paired with students without disabilities. Students can volunteer to be a peer buddy and sit with their buddy at lunch.
- Praise/reward students who include others or present acts of kindness.
- Hand out tickets as rewards. These tickets can be used to get items from a prize box.

#### Suggested Activities for Students

- Eat and Greet table: Conversation Jar. Cut out the Conversation Jar list of questions and place them in a jar or baggie. Have students pick out one at a time and discuss. Encourage active listening and opportunities for all students to respond.
- Friendship Challenge: Provide students with a checklist to complete. Have students bring their checklist to lunch the following week and reward students who have completed it!



## Resources

The Family Dinner Project. (2019). Retrieved from <https://thefamilydinnerproject.org>

Developed for Every Moment Counts ([www.everymomentcounts.org](http://www.everymomentcounts.org))

Every Moment Counts is committed to building capacity of all school personnel, families, and community providers to promote children's mental health and contribute to prevention and intervention of mental health challenges through professional education, website resources, and coaching.

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For further information contact: **Susan Bazyk** at [s.bazyk@csuohio.edu](mailto:s.bazyk@csuohio.edu)

